

**CALENDAR ITEM
C64**

A	Statewide	10/16/15
		W 6005.161
S	Statewide	R. B. Greenwood

**CONSIDER AN APPLICATION FOR A PERMIT TO CONDUCT
NON-EXCLUSIVE GEOPHYSICAL SURVEYS USING AN UNMANNED,
AUTONOMOUS WAVE GLIDER ON TIDE AND SUBMERGED LANDS
UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE
CALIFORNIA STATE LANDS COMMISSION**

APPLICANT:

Liquid Robotics, Inc.
Attn.: Mr. Douglas Carlen
1329 Moffett Park Drive
Sunnyvale, CA 94089

BACKGROUND:

Liquid Robotics, Inc. has applied for a statewide low-energy offshore Geophysical Survey Permit. This permit is issued to qualified companies to perform geophysical surveys of the ocean bottom for purposes including, but not limited to:

- Scientific research, including surveys of near-shore sand erosion and deposition, seafloor changes, and seafloor topography and bathymetry;
- Surveying existing pipelines to assess any structural damage, or spanning;
- Identifying and avoiding seafloor faults and hazards when designing pipeline and cable projects, reducing the likelihood of ruptures due to these hazards;
- Surveying existing fiber-optic cables and other seafloor structures and utilities to determine how well they are buried;
- Developing maps of hard bottom and essential fish habitat or cultural resources indicating where the placement of permanent or temporary objects (e.g., cables or anchors) should be precluded;
- Searching for the locations of historic shipwrecks, other sunken boats, and airplanes; and
- Auditing and supporting dredging of harbors and navigation channels.

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Geophysical data will be collected via a unmanned, autonomous floating platform called a wave glider (7 to 10 feet in length, traveling at 1 to 2 knots) with attached or towed passive geophysical equipment and/or acoustic-generating low-energy geophysical equipment operating at frequencies greater than or equal to 200 kilohertz (kHz); the use of high-energy equipment such as airguns or water guns is expressly prohibited under this permit. Under the general terms of this Geophysical Survey Permit, the Permittee is required to provide Commission staff with advance notification of operations and the specifications of the equipment to be employed. A survey-specific Marine Wildlife Contingency Plan is not required due to the autonomous nature and small size of the wave glider and restrictions on equipment type and operating frequency (i.e., frequencies above 200 kHz are above the known functioning hearing range of, and thus cannot be heard by, marine mammals). In addition, a survey-specific Oil Spill Contingency Plan is not required because the wave glider is solar-powered (with lithium battery storage) and does not hold any petroleum products or hazardous liquids that could result in a spill. The Permittee will submit post-survey reports, including a narrative description of the work performed, spatial information related to survey track lines, and any incidents within thirty (30) days of survey completion. Upon request, Commission staff will receive copies of all data derived from any and all surveys under this permit.

PROPOSED PERMIT APPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION:

Liquid Robotics, Inc. is a subsea survey and mapping company. Other survey applications include sediment transport studies, pipeline routes, archaeological surveys, and benthic habitat surveys. Staff recommends approval of this data-gathering permit application.

TERMS OF PROPOSED PERMIT:

One (1) year, beginning October 17, 2015, through October 16, 2016.

PREREQUISITE CONDITIONS, FEES AND EXPENSES:

Required fees, expense deposit, and other security have been received.

STATUTORY AND OTHER REFERENCES:

1. Public Resources Code section 6826.
2. Public Resources Code section 21080, subdivision (c).
3. California Code of Regulations, Title 2, Article 2.9, section 2100
4. California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15074.

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OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. The staff recommends that the Commission find that this activity is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as a categorically exempt project. The project is exempt under Class 6, Information Collection; California Code of Regulations, Title 2, section 2905, subdivision (e)(3).

Authority: Public Resources Code section 21084 and California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15300 and California Code of Regulations, Title 2, section 2905.

2. This activity involves lands identified as possessing significant environmental values pursuant to Public Resources Code section 6370 et seq., but such activity will not affect those significant lands. Bases upon the staff's consultation with the persons nominating such lands and through the CEQA review process, it is the staff's opinion that the project, as proposed, is consistent with its use classification.

EXHIBIT:

- A. Permit Regions

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is recommended that the Commission:

CEQA FINDINGS:

Find that the activity is exempt from the requirements of CEQA pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Title 14, section 15061 as a categorically exempt project, Class 6, Information Collection; California Code of Regulations, Title 2, section 2905, subdivision (e)(3).

SIGNIFICANT LANDS

Find that this activity is consistent with the use classification designated by the Commission for the land pursuant to Public Resources Code section 6370 et seq.

AUTHORIZATION:

Authorize issuance to Liquid Robotics, Inc. of a Non-Exclusive General Permit to conduct low-energy geophysical surveys from October 17, 2015, through October 16, 2016, within Permit Regions I, II, III, and IV as designated on Exhibit A, attached hereto.

EXHIBIT A PERMIT REGIONS

